



TICT OFF

Tippecanoe Invasive Cooperative Taskforce Newsletter
June 2021

Featured Invasive: Poison Hemlock

By: [Southern Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management \(SICIM\)](#).

This month's invasive of the month is pulled from SICIM's monthly news letter. They featured this plant in their May newsletter. Poison Hemlock is now blooming in Tippecanoe, so we thought it would be appropriate to share the information. Be on the lookout for this invasive plant.

Also known as deadly hemlock or poison parsley, poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum* L.) is a highly toxic herbaceous biennial (sometimes short-lived perennial) plant that easily invades disturbed or early successional sites and is typically found in moist areas along roads, streams, trails, ditches, forest edges and waste areas. This plant can be noticed very early in the spring every year, as it is typically one of the first to green up, usually in late February to early March if temperatures are favorable. A native of Eurasia, this species was introduced to North America as an ornamental plant in the early- to mid-19th century and has been reported in all 92 Indiana counties. Poison hemlock is regulated under the Terrestrial Plant Rule and is also one of the Prohibited Noxious Weeds in Indiana.



Hemlock in flower
Photo by Ansel Oommen

IDENTIFICATION AND BIOLOGY: Poison hemlock reproduces prolifically via seeds that are flattened and ribbed. It is a low-lying rosette the first year and bolts to 3 – 9 feet tall, typically in its second year. The stems are stout, smooth, hollow, with distinctive purple spotting. Flowers are small, white and found in umbrella-shaped clusters in early summer (June-July). The alternate fern-like leaves are pinnately compound and usually triangular in outline. Seeds mature in late summer (August-September) and are easily spread by mowing and agricultural machinery.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Poison hemlock prefers full sun to light shade, moist conditions, and a fertile loamy soil. It can be found in disturbed areas along edges of degraded wetlands and prairies, low-lying areas along small tributaries, banks of drainage ditches, woodland borders, fence rows, low-lying areas along railroads and roads, pastures, and abandoned fields.

ECOLOGICAL THREAT: Poison hemlock contains toxic alkaloids that are extremely harmful if ingested by livestock or human. However it can also reduce aesthetic value of landscapes and occasionally invade native habitats, replacing native vegetation by its rapid growth. The plant's alkaloids may also be absorbed through the skin, so wear long sleeves, pants, closed shoes, and gloves if you are handling poison hemlock. Cases of poisoning due to poison hemlock ingestion are rare as the plants emit a foul odor that makes it undesirable and unpalatable to livestock and humans. Initial symptoms of toxicity – nervousness, trembling, and loss of coordination – will occur within a few hours of ingestion. Followed by depression, coma, and/or death. Consumption and toxicity in animals usually occur in poorly managed or overgrazed pastures where animals are forced to graze poison hemlock because of lack of desirable forage. All parts of this plant (leaves, stem, fruit, and root) are poisonous.

Invasive of the Month: Poison Hemlock

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CONTROL: The most effective control may be mowing to prevent seed production, followed with herbicide applications to rosettes and re-sprouts as outlined in the “Chemical” section below.

WARNING: All parts of this plant are poisonous to both animals and humans.

Use caution when managing this plant.

- **Prevention:** Poison hemlock seed often is inadvertently spread by mowing, road maintenance or agricultural machinery. Mow infested areas along roadsides, ditch banks and field edges before seed matures. Avoid working, recreating in or walking or driving through infested areas during seed dispersal. Also, clean clothing, shoes, ATVs or other vehicles following activity in infested areas.
- **Manual:** Can be effective for single plants or very small infestations. Pull or dig up all plants, place in trash bag and dispose of with regular trash. Always wear protective clothing, including gloves and eye protection, to prevent the plant from contacting the skin.
- **Mechanical:** Mowing or cutting may be effective control but must be repeated often because the taproot can send up new shoots after a single mowing. Tilling or grubbing can kill hemlock and prevent seed production, but is generally not recommended because of soil disturbance.
- **Chemical:** Effective for large infestations and for spot spray applications to individuals and clumps of plants. Herbicide application should be performed while the plant is actively growing and before flowering. First-year basal rosettes may be sprayed from midsummer through fall. Second-year plants begin bolting to produce flower stalks in April and begin flowering in mid-May. The following herbicide active ingredients are recommended. For each, follow label directions and use a surfactant to increase effectiveness.
 - **Glyphosate:** Use herbicides containing at least a 41% concentration of glyphosate and follow label directions to mix a 2% spray solution plus surfactant. Thoroughly wet all surfaces of the plant, but not to the point of runoff. Use caution as glyphosate is non-selective and will damage or kill any plant it contacts.
 - **2,4-D or Triclopyr:** Broadleaf-specific herbicides that will not harm grasses. Most effective on first-year rosettes or very small second-year plants.

IMPORTANT: The pesticide label is the law! When using any chemical control, always read the entire pesticide label carefully, follow all mixing and application instructions and use all personal protective gear and clothing specified. Contact the Office of Indiana State Chemist (OISC) for additional pesticide use requirements, restrictions or recommendations.

- **Maintenance:** Follow-up treatments will be required, as seeds already present in the soil will sprout.



Hemlock rosette before it bolts and goes to flower
Photo by Barry Rice

Volunteer Appreciation

By: Sam Cody, Niches Land Trust

After 5 weeks of battling it out in the woodland arena, the dust has finally settled from this year's War of the Weeds organized by NICHES Land Trust. Volunteers stepped up from all over the region to fill an astounding **313 volunteer shifts** pulling the invading onslaught of garlic mustard. NICHES was excited to leave multiple local preserves in Tippecanoe County virtually garlic mustard-free this year (a few pesky missed plants remain to tell tales of warning to their noxious comrades). As volunteers tirelessly removed truckload after truckload of the weed, their morale was rallied by the native plants and animals that surrounded them. Snakes, salamanders, orchids, turtles, rare moths, baby squirrels, and the patriotic bald eagle all paid visits to our heroes between skirmishes. A vibrant understory of freshly liberated spring ephemeral wildflowers cheered them on throughout the fray. Miraculously, the only allied losses were 2 water bottles, a pair of sunglasses, and a few unlucky misidentified native plants. NICHES wants to extend a **MASSIVE** thank you to everyone who joined for this year's War of the Weeds and a thank you to TICT for helping promote the event and spread awareness about Invasive Species control in our area!



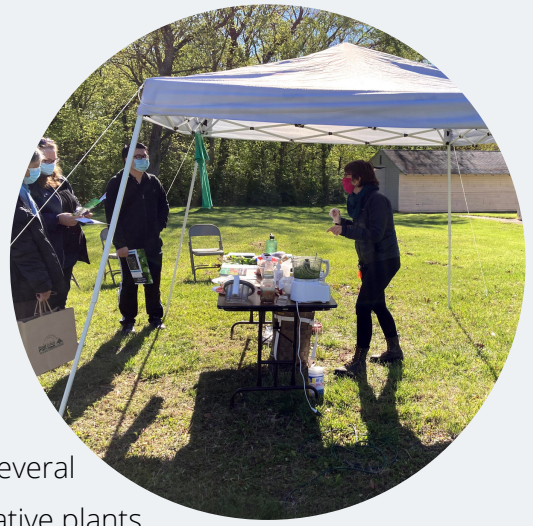
Upcoming Invasive Events

- TICT Virtual Panel on Invasive Plants - June 16, 6:30pm Join members of the Tippecanoe Invasive Cooperative Taskforce (TICT) as they present information on locally found invasive species and the best way to "knock them out." Registration: <https://www.nicheslandtrust.org/calendar/tict-panel-zoom-presentation>
- Niches Oxeye Daisy & Sweet Clover Pulls - happening at various Niches properties on multiple dates. More info and registration on the Niches Calendar: <https://www.nicheslandtrust.org/calendar#year=2021&month=6&day=3&view=month>
- WREC Green Tour Stop #2: June 16, 1pm-3pm Learn about cooperative land management on a WREC property. Learn more and register: <http://www.wabashriver.net/green-tours/>
- CISMA Annual Conference: August 4th - 7th, online and in-person. The theme this year is Why Do We Manage Invasive Species? <http://www.sicim.info/cismaconference>

Invasive Education at the Native Plant Fest

By Angie Garcia-Miller

Tippecanoe's very first Native Plant Fest was held on Saturday, May 8th at Ross Camp in West Lafayette hosted by the Soil and Water Conservation District. The event consisted of a variety of activities including hikes, demonstrations, educational programs and a native plant sale. Although the event centered around native plants, several programs on invasive species were included since they greatly impact native plants and ecosystems. Shannon Stanis with the Wabash River Enhancement Corporation and Sam Cody of NICHES Land Trust lead a pesto-making demonstration using Garlic Mustard. Amber Slaughterbeck with Southern Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management talked with participants about the best ways to identify and control invasive shrubs, like Bush Honeysuckle. Patty Jones of the Remove Invasive Plants Squad led a group to pull Garlic Mustard at the Camp. There was also a program on using native alternatives to invasive landscape plants presented by Mickey Penrod, Master Gardener, and president of the West Central chapter of the Indiana Native Plant Society. Several local agencies and numerous volunteers assisted with the event, which had approximately 250 people in attendance. Other, native plant-centric topics that were covered include turf-to-prairie conversion, rain gardens, landscaping with native plants in urban settings, and pollinators.



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W R E C ' S T O O L L I B R A R Y

Clean up your rain garden or prep your site for next year's garden by borrowing from our invasive plant removal tool library. One Pullerbear or two soil knives can be checked out for two weeks at a time.

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